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*Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act passed
by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 423-1 in House; 89-3 in Senate*

(WASHINGTON, DC) -- Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-03) joined 423 of his colleagues by voting for the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. This bipartisan legislation takes several key steps to make children and all Americans safer, including essentially eliminating lead from toys and children's products; prohibiting the use of dangerous phthalates in children's toys and child care products; and providing the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) with significantly greater resources and personnel.

There were 45 million toys and children's products recalled in 2007 – including Barbie accessories, Thomas the Tank Engines, toy magnets, and lead-coated jewelry. Certain toys and children's products were found to contain nearly 200 times the legal amount of lead.

“It’s unthinkable that our children have been playing with tainted toys,” said Congressman Carnahan.

“I applaud the passage of this landmark legislation, which provides the CPSC with the ability to protect consumers and most importantly our children.”

Throughout the conference process between House and Senate members Congressman Carnahan strongly advocated the conference committee include:

1. a strong lead standard
2. provisions that cover toys for children age 12 and younger
3. a ban on any specific phthalate; and
4. mandatory standards for testing toys for the full range of potential hazards.

This year, the number of recalls of toys and children's products is actually up 29 percent over the first half of 2007. This critically important bill will strengthen the ability of the CPSC to prevent dangerous toys from entering the market, get unsafe products off the shelves more quickly, and increase fines and penalties for violating product safety laws. The bill also provides whistleblower protections for private sector employees regarding alleged violations of any CPSC-enforced product safety requirements.

Late last year, Congressman Carnahan discussed necessary safety thresholds and inspections that insure child safety with leaders in the industry at St. Louis toy manufacturer T.L. Clark Incorporated. T.L. Clark, makers of Learning Products, is recognized as a leader in advancing measures to assure child health and safety from toy products they provide to daycare centers.

The U.S. Senate passed the identical measure and the White House has said President George Bush will sign the legislation into law.